CHAPTER II.

KURDISH WOMEN: THEIR FAMILY CEREMONIES.

KURDISH maidens are, as a rule, allowed to choose 584
their own husbands, and the practice of courtship is
not unknown. The father's consent is necessary,
though couples sometimes dispense with it by running 583
away together when, for pecuniary or other reasons,
it is withheld. Among the families of the chieftains,
however, marriages de convenance are usual, and the
parties are frequently comparative strangers to each
other. The ceremony of betrothal consists of a 584
reception at which refreshments are served. The
expression "To drink sherbet"[1] signifies with the [274]
Kurds to celebrate a betrothal. The bridegroom's
presence at this ceremony is not necessary, or even
usual, and he is generally represented by a near
relative, a brother if he has one, who brings with
him the customary presents to the bride and her
parents.

The great feature at a Kurdish wedding is the 585
performance of the tchopee, or national dance, of which 535
the women are quite as fond as are the peasants of
Macedonia and Bulgaria. During marriage festivities,

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[1] This favourite Oriental beverage is made of the juice of fruits, cooled with ice or snow.

[Page 131]

[illegible]

work in building and repair, the only significant production of the carpenters is the small chest used by housewives for their goods. Almost every married woman has a collection of "treasures," clothing, jewelry, glassware, and the like, which dates from her wedding (it is, in fact, a part of her dowry, and a significant economic commodity, as it may include a sizeable sum in gold), and which is displayed on festive occasions. These goods are stored in wooden chests, sometimes covered with sheets of tin, and always brightly painted. Two shops in Rowanduz maintained by carpenters display a large number of these, and there is always a demand for them in the event of a wedding. The carpenter's tools and equipment, [illegible], hammers, planes, chisels, nails, and so on, are almost all imported from Europe or elsewhere in the Middle East. Wooden biers, and occasionally coffins, for the dead are also made by the carpenters. Smaller items of wood, such as cradles, are fashioned in the households of villagers. 325 332 323 422 415 [591] 472 [433] 322 [768] [859]

The main work of the farriers and blacksmiths is the shoeing of horses, mules, and donkeys. The government veterinarian attends to the beasts of the civil service and army, but, although his services are available to the townspeople, most prefer the farriers who, in addition to their craft, are thought to be experts in curing animal diseases. The workshops of both farriers and blacksmiths, with their distinctive anvils and charcoal fires, are within the bazar, and the shoeing of a donkey 326 231 [232] absence of investigation, the function of village tattooing in this area is not precisely known, but it appears that it has no tribal or territorial significance, and is either decorative, magical, or both. 304

The toilet of children does not differ greatly from that of adults, and girls of wealthier homes use cosmetics in imitation of their mothers, just as the older boys remain unshaven in hopes of growing a moustache. For six months after birth, the nails of a baby must not be cut, and an infant's hair is trimmed for the first time at about the age of one year. At four or five the boys are circumcised, but the accompanying ceremony, as well as the operation itself, will be found described in a later section. The ear lobes of the girls can be pierced at any time in their early years, but cutting a nostril for the khizim or nose-ring is only to be seen in the villages. 302 [854] 304 [855] [164]

The jewelry of women, of gold and silver, has an important economic function in daily life, for it is a repository of surplus capital, just like real estate, and provides insurance against poverty in the event of some disaster, additionally assuring the woman herself of some wealth if divorced or widowed. It is gathered in part from the bridal dowry and in part as gifts from her husband. If, for example, the dowry of a maiden is set at fifty dinars ($140.00), and this sum is matched by her father, making a total of a hundred dinars ($280.00), only a part is needed for dresses and household goods, 301 [474] 583 301

d the remainder is converted into ornaments. Inasmuch 301 [583]
the greater number of husbands do not anticipate di-
orce, a profit realized in business may be presented to 301 454
eir spouses in this form, a matter of some delight for
e wife, not solely from the decorative point of view,
ly land and precious metal have real and lasting value
the popular mind. A laborer in Rowanduz whose monthly
rnings were rarely in excess of four dinars ($11.20)
dicated how his wife's jewelry had been stolen and sub-
sequently recovered, its value estimated at eighty dinars
($224.00), a large sum for a man of this occupation. The
welry is the property of the wife, and she takes it with [586]
r if divorced, and is free to dispose of it as she
ooses. If her husband falls into need, she usually sells
t to reinstate him or support the family, and may sub-
idize her son, perhaps in an advantageous marriage, in
e same way. The jewelry itself is today a product of 301 [326]
e gold and silversmiths of Erbil, and is not greatly
ifferent in style from that produced for the lower classes
n Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and southern Iraq, save that
me of the heavy silver ornaments of the Bedouin type,
uch as anklets, are not in use. In general, chains and
angles of precious metal are made up into more or less
omplex bracelets, necklaces, and earrings. One of the
ost expensive items is a collar or necklace of con-
centric circles of gold chain joined together by flat
angles of various geometric shapes, and another, the kurs
r disk used in the woman's headdress, has already been

for the Kurds themselves, safeguard had a more important application. If a man was a member of a group engaged in a vendetta, and had to pass through dangerous territory, he could put himself under the protection of a neutral group whose men provided him with an escort and, should he be killed, was obligated to avenge his death just as if he had been one of its own. 690 577 616

Sanctuary is something of major importance among the Kurds. If a man had committed a crime, usually a murder, he could throw himself on the mercy of the nearest chieftain and the latter was bound by honor to protect him from his pursuers. Often the chieftain paid the [illegible] or blood-money to the injured parties, although unrelated to them or to the criminal, as a gracious gesture. Of greater interest, perhaps, the chieftain provided sanctuary for runaway lovers. If a youth and a maiden fall in love and their parents forbade the match, they sometimes fled together, and, if captured by their irate relatives, would be slain. It is said that the first thing for such fugitives to do is to have intercourse, as they cannot be separated except by death, for a woman who has lost her virginity out of wedlock must be killed by her kinsmen. If the pair were able to reach a chieftain, the latter now acted as a matchmaker. He sought out the parents of the girl, informed them that their daughter was under his protection, attempted to reconcile them to the marriage, by this time consummated, and often paid the dowry of the bride, again, as a matter 626 628 622 [583] 628 584 622 [604] his lifetime, but it is difficult to see, in view of the inexorable character of the civil code reinforced by scripture, how one heir might be completely cut off in favor of another, and no examples could be elicited. If a man wished to disinherit all his relatives, a doubtful event, he could do this best by leaving his property to the Islamic faith, making of it a waqf or pious bequest, a legacy which is just as hard to get around as the equality of the claims of sons. 423 428 428

The bulk of the estate, animals, houses, land, tools, or capital, is commonly owned by males, although there is no reason why a woman cannot possess them as well. Lali Khan, since the death of Isma'il Beg and the imprisonment of her closest male relatives, offers a case in point. Generally speaking, however, the outstanding property of most women consists of a dowry, jewelry, and household goods. The dowry (mahr, from Arabic) in the generality of Islamic society, and at Rowanduz, is paid in money by the bridegroom to the father or guardian of the girl. It consists of two parts, the muqaddam and the mu'akhar, stipulated in the contract of marriage. The first, a half or two-thirds of the total amount, is paid in cash at the time the marriage contract is signed to the parent of the bride who is responsible for its administration. The second part, the remainder of the sum, must be paid to the woman if she is divorced against her will or widowed. As might be expected, it is not required for 421 562 583 421 [586] a husband to honor this second amount if the contract is broken before the marriage is consummated or if the woman, for some reason, abandons the house of her spouse. In Rowanduz, in contrast to other areas, the father of the bride is expected to double the first portion of the dowry, the _muqaddam_, from his own resources, and the money thus realized is given into the hands of the maiden. "The money of the _muqaddam_ is for the girl," it was related, "and it is an evil and impious person who withholds it from her. There are some bad fathers who eat up their daughters' dowries." The dowry of a girl of the lesser townspeople in Rowanduz is at least 20 or 30 _dinars_ ($56.00 or $84.00) and that of daughters of the wealthier families or the aristocrats is much greater. 583 591

It must be realized that the amount of a dowry is also a sign of social status, and to this end the figures written into the marriage contract often have more prestige than reality behind them. A number of discussions of this point have been heard in the Middle East, and one of these, similar to those recorded in Rowanduz but perhaps more aptly expressed, was the expostulation of an English-speaking teacher, one Hasan al-Gamil, in Egypt. "When, as a youth, I returned to my parents' town from the university in Cairo," he said, "I was called upon to negotiate the dowry of a maiden whom my younger brother wished to marry. Her relatives, when I spoke with them, named a figure so extravagant I could hardly credit my ears. I told them it was improper to bargain for a girl, and that, although I 583 554 agreed with them and went beyond them in the estimation of her worth, only the sale of all my family's property would realize their demand. One of them was kind enough to take me aside and to explain that there was a substantial difference between the documentary amount, publicized to the townspeople, and that which must actually be paid." It is perhaps for this reason that the *muqaddam*, the amount "paid" at the time of the wedding, is a much larger proportion of the dowry than the *mu'akhar*, that which must be forthcoming in divorce, the former representing in part the social fiction and the latter a more realistic economic appraisal. Nevertheless, the dowry functions strongly as an argument against heedless separations, and few men, having invested a substantial part of their own or their relatives' capital in a match, will undertake divorce lightly. As recorded above, many persons use unusual monetary gains to give their wives jewelry of precious metal, a matter of pleasure for the lady and, at the same time, further insurance against divorce or financial catastrophe. 583 584 [586] [301] [593] [454]

To approach the Kurdish kinship system, it is necessary to deal with certain other aspects of marriage, the first of which is incest. Unlawful intercourse or marriage between certain relatives is also governed by the religious law of Islam, and one cannot with confidence adduce anything from contemporary Kurdish society which will provide a functional or final explanation of the specific determinants of these prescriptions. There is 582 834 and, if suitable, tries to arrange the match.* As previously noticed, couples on the rarest occasions may elope, taking sanctuary with a chieftain who will arrange their marriage. Almost all, however, defer to the wishes of their elders.

When the choice of a bride has been made, by the youth and his parents or by the parents alone, two parties, one of male relatives and friends and the other of females, excluding the boy and his father and mother, are dispatched to the house of the girl, sending notice of their arrival in advance. At this house the men are ushered into the guest-room and the women gather in another room. Many idle pleasantries are exchanged, and the men of the youth's party, in a circuitous fashion, extoll his virtues at length until there is no doubt that the father of the girl understands their errand. No mention is made of a match, in order that the maiden's parent, if the alliance must be declined, may excuse himself gracefully. The parties then take their leave, after arranging a second meeting. The parents of the girl now discuss the matter with their daughter and other relatives of the household. The consent of all, particularly that of the son of the father's brother, must be obtained. At the second meeting with the representatives of the youth, the father of the maiden expresses his approval, if the match is agreed upon, and the important matter of the dowry is decided by relatives other than the parents of the pair concerned.

e asks the same question of the youth. When the youth 584
onsents, the mulla requires the maiden's father or
eputy to repeat a formula in which he formally gives the
irl in marriage. Taking up a pen, he then supplies, with
ome flourish, the names of the parties concerned and the
ums of the dowry on the contract, and the document is
igned by himself, the two witnesses, the youth, and the
ather of the girl. The ceremony is completed by further
recitation from the Quran by the mulla and mutual congratu-
lations. The youth usually kisses the hands of the mulla,
is new father-in-law, and the witnesses.

The festivities of the betrothal are small in com- 585
parison with those of the wedding. There are banquets at
he homes of the parents, and perhaps some dancing and
usic, but these only demand part of a day. The muqadam, [583]●
he primary fraction of the dowry, is typically paid to
he father of the maiden by one of the male relatives of
he suitor when the contract is signed. At the same time,
he mother of the youth sends an expensive gift of jewelry,
racelets and earrings, to the girl. The period between 584
he betrothal and the wedding varies, from several weeks
o a year, and the two persons engaged are permitted great
reedom in their relations. If the youth can meet secretly
ith his fiancée, he may kiss her and present her with a
ring, a plain piece of jewelry, sometimes setting a stone
r cut glass, usually worn on a finger of the right hand.
ome men wear such rings themselves. At the same time, most

girls exhibit shyness and what may be described as willfulness in their behavior. "If the young man is a guest at her house and asks her for a glass of water, she may refuse him and the other people will laugh." Both boy and girl are embarrassed by a certain amount of joking by their elders and companions, and chafing a young man about his coming wedding is a common form of amusement. During this period, the girl's father is expected to have doubled the sum of the muqqadam from his own resources, and it is expended on the clothing, household needs, and jewelry of the prospective bride. Both houses are scenes of intense activity in preparation for the wedding. 584 [522] [583]

When a day has been selected for the wedding celebration, one of the elder men of the youth's family makes a tour of the town, inviting relatives and friends of his household. A similar invitation is issued by the father and brothers of the maiden. Those invited send many gifts of food to the two houses. On the forenoon of the wedding, the mother and sisters of the bride bathe and dress her carefully, rebraiding her hair and staining her hands with henna. Members of her family take presents of henna to the townspeople with which the recipients paint their fingers. One can always recognize a wedding-guest for some weeks afterward by such marks. At the two houses, those of the bridegroom and the bride, parties of guests assemble, and refreshments and banquets are given throughout the day, the brother or most intimate friend of the youth receiving the 585 [302]

No religious or ritual
mechanism exists for bringing together any group larger than the village, and no 571
symbiotic relations of a practical or ritual nature have been developed.

This organizational form is associated with a strong emphasis on the father's 592
brother's daughter as preferred spouse, and marked tendency to close family endogamy. The strength of emphasis is indicated by (1) expressed norms, (2) relative brideprice, and (3) actual statistical occurrence.

(1) Informants agree that paternal cousins have first rights to a girl, and 592
where the father of a girl contemplates giving her in marriage to anyone else, the 604
paternal cousin must first release her by renouncing his claim. Cases of violence 605
resulting from breach of this obligation on the part of the father were collected in the field and have been recorded by others in the literature.[6] Giving one's daughter to a brother's son is further considered thoughtful and proper: the father knows his daughter's spouse well, and will also be able to exert some control over his actions toward her after marriage; marriage should be between equals, and no one is closer in status and sentiments than a paternal cousin. Small children are pleasantly embarrassed when teased for being "in love" with their paternal cousin. The importance of endogamy in maintaining family property is also 592
recognized, though the problem only arises with any degree of gravity where Koranic 428
laws of inheritance, giving stipulated fractions of the estate to female descendants, are strictly followed, and this does not generally seem to be the case.

(2) It is an agreed privilege for paternal cousins, to less extent also other near 605
kin, to receive the girl at a reduced brideprice. The normal brideprice for village 583
girls ranges between £30-100. Paternal cousins generally pay only wedding expenses.

(3) The actual frequency of father's brother's daughter, and other cousin, 162
marriage is high, apparently ranging around fifty percent. The degree of relationship between all living spouses in two normal sized Hamawand villages fall into the following categories:

FaBrDa (amoza)	MoBrDa (khaloza)	Fa and Mo SiDa (pura)	Other relative	Unrelated, in village	Other village	Total
9	1	2	3	2	4	21

Taking the normal fluctuations in size and sex distribution of sibling groups into account, this probably approximates the maximal frequency that marriage with actual, non-classificatory paternal cousin can reasonably attain.

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[6] E.g. W. R. Hay, *Two Years in Kurdistan* (London, 1921), p. 71.

183 Where the cost of marrying an unrelated, "stranger" girl is so high and the
ormative preference for near kin clear, the inducement for the young man to seek
bride among his cousins is evident. Consequently, the young men make the
ight" choice though they appear subjectively to feel, and invariably express the
pinion, that they are entirely free to seek any bride they might wish. The prob-
121 em in this situation centers around what the motivation of the girl's father is,
hat he should forego his right to a brideprice which, to the Kurdish farmer, con-
titutes a minor fortune. Or put somewhat differently, the central problem is:
hat are the advantages gained in this system by giving one's daughter to a
[162] rother's son which compensate one for the loss of the brideprice.

The answer would seem to lie in the political structure. In the Kurdish lineage
613 ystem, all groups are subject to a constant pressure towards segmentation and fis-
571 ion, unmodulated by the interlocking circles of identification normally associated
621 ith segmentary descent systems (among the Nuer, territorial vs. descent groups,
665 ross-cutting age-grades; among Tallensi, further the ritual collaboration between
604 ineages, etc.). This pressure is painfully evident in factional activity within the
152 illages, and emerges in all first-hand descriptions of Kurdish life.[9] Kurdish vil-
ages are characterized by a constant struggle for political power on the part of a
ajority of the adult men, at times even women. Such political power is propor-
ional to the number of riflemen one can mobilize to support one's claims. In a
atrilineal lineage system, a man can expect political support only from his agnatic
elatives, those who by destiny belong to his political sub-section; and the factions
n the village tend to be alignments of the younger men of a small lineage segment
round an older leader. These segments consist primarily of brothers, sons, and
rothers' sons. The relation to the latter is most critical: it creates the first poten-
tial line of cleavage between collateral branches. If a man alienates his nephews
by refusing them their traditional rights, he loses their political support. If he, on
the other hand, gives them his daughters in marriage, the ties are reinforced and
lineage solidarity maintained. The girl's father creates an obligation on the part of
his brother's son to give him political support by exempting him from paying the
[521] brideprice. No other son-in-law can, in the lineage system, fill this role as political
supporter; consequently they must invariably pay brideprice. The transaction may
thus be regarded as constituting a type of delayed exchange: the father receives
political allegiance in his lifetime from his brother's son in return for the daughter
[182] which he gives him. In this way, the pattern of preferential father's brother's

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[9] E.g. C. J. Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan* (London, 1836); E. B. Soane, *Through Mesopotamia and Kurdistan in Disguise* (London, 1926); Hay, op. cit.

daughter marriage serves to reinforce the political implications of the lineage system.

Jordan MG1

daughter marriage serves to reinforce the political implications of the lineage system. [illegible]

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If this view is generally correct, one would expect to find a high frequency of 121
father's brother's daughter marriage associated with a developed lineage organization in the Middle East, and the frequencies to be appreciably lower in villages with a different type of organization. In the southern Kurdish area, this is clearly so: for other areas, the literature gives no conclusive evidence.

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In the southern Kurdish *feudally* organized territory, neighboring on the above 631
discussed Hamawand territory, the comparative picture might be summarized as 184
follows: (1) The expressed norms are modified, though not basically changed. K
First rights of paternal cousins are not as strongly emphasized, and the ideal of
equality between spouses tends to be interpreted in terms of village endogamy [582
rather than with reference to descent group. 583] (2) Brideprices tend to be lower for all categories of husbands, especially those of the local community (this holds true for the villages, not for the larger towns, where great variations in class and wealth intervene); some villages have made formal agreements that no brideprice should be charged within the village unit. An alternative and moderately popular way of avoiding brideprice is the sister exchange between two indifferently related
men. (3) The actual frequency of father's brother's daughter marriage clearly K
drops, while village endogamy (in villages generally larger than those with a lineage 162
organization) remains high. A complete census of marriages in one such non- [620]
tribal village may serve as an example:

		Fa and Mo				
FaBrDa (amozza)	MoBrDa (khalozza)	SiDa (purza)	Other relative	Unrelated, in village	Other village	Total
6	1	1	9	19	10	46

This picture would seem to be consistent with the views expressed above. J

Hilma Granqvist[10] gives some comparable material from an Arab village in 101
Palestine, where the local community is divided into patrilineal descent groups, 621
called clans, apparently of a segmentary type; but where several of these descent 611
groups reside together in a large village, and have no wider political or territorial J
importance. She offers the following frequencies of degree of relationship between 162
spouses in one village:[11]

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[10] Hilma Granqvist, *Marriage Conditions in a Palestinian Village* (Helsingfors, 1931).

[11] *Idem*, pp. 81, 92, 194-195.

301 *Jewellery.* Jewellery in various forms belongs to woman's clothing. It is an element in the presentation of a dress, affects its whole character, and, as it were, completes the picture. It is necessary to go back to the Renaissance and Baroque periods to find in Western culture times when jewellery was so closely linked to woman's appearance and so integral a part of the dress as it is in the Kurdish woman's costume of to-day.

991 5 301 Certain parts of the dress are simply jewellery, for example the cap chin chain, *[illegible]* or *[illegible]*, composed of coins or glass beads (E. 2288), which holds it in place on the head, and the coin at the top of the fez to which the neck-shoulder veil is attached. A chain of small ornaments may be sewn on the dress along the edge of the jacket (E. 2293), 0.96 m. long. There existed circular temple ornaments, *gul*, (E. 2294, 2295). Some necklets were composed of stones and silver objects whose form and material were supposed to possess protective qualities and to avert the evil eye. Certain amulet boxes were used as ornaments, for example a cylindrical silver amulet box, *[illegible]*, (E. 2292) with attached coins[28]. Last but not least the jewellery represents ready money, clusters of coins being sewn on as cover for the fez (E. 2298) or assembled in the form of chains of coins with inlaid gems, attached to the turban. Jewellery is a part of the bride price, is the woman's private property, and thus an investment publically exhibited in witness of the woman's economic status. She carries it on herself, the safest depository. ● [583]

301 Other kinds of jewellery include earrings, bangles, necklaces, nose ornaments and belts. Bangles, *bāzin*, (E. 2296-97)[29] can be of silver and also of turquoise-coloured glass. Necklaces consisting of various semi-precious stones with pendant amulet packets called *[illegible]* (E. 2290) or *[illegible]* (E. 2291), plus necklaces of 20 fragrant beads of dried cloves, *[illegible]*, (E. 2289), also with small amulet packets, are worn. Women's belts can be composed of gold coins side by side or a military belt on which are mounted one very large, eight small, and twenty very small silver buckles (E. 2300)[30]. This type of belt was, as mentioned (p. 77), worn at Topzawa by new arrivals with a specially long, pinned-up kirtle and a hood. These women wore across the hood a triple silver chain mounted with turquoise, *[illegible]*, (E. 2299).

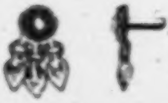

Fig. 68: Nose ornament for women (E. 2303).
Worn in a hole in the left nostril. Sulaimani. Scale 1:1.

Nose ornaments in the form of a small gold pin with movable attachment, *[illegible]*, (E. 2303) are worn in the left nostril. Children also wear jewellery. This may be blue buttons or blue glass beads (E. 2287a-d) (cf. Superstition and Witchcraft, p. 134), but also of more precious metals. Brow ornaments of gold, plaited and stuck into the hair on the front of the head, in the form of a little crescent with three heart-shaped, movable pendants, known as *gul* (E. 2302), the same type being called by the Arabs *hilāl*[31]. Bangles of silver with one or more chains that link them with one or more finger rings, an Indian form of ornament. Finally the child might have obliquely across its chest an ornament and amulet chain, *kaškūl*, (E. 2301) called after one of the objects, a small reproduction of a beggar's bowl[32].

substituted that will provide that deep contentment of soul, the harmony of mind, that I came across 871
in the village women who could neither read nor write? 182

The boys, even as small as 6–7 years of age, led in Sulaimani what we should call a street life. Playgrounds were unknown, corresponding to the fact that the attitude there was not that childhood should be passed in play. To give street life its due, it must be remembered that the men, so to say, 807
live in the street, whilst the women and small children occupy the home. At work and at leisure boys and men spent their time outside the home. In consequence the boys obtained a street education among men, and we must return to ancient Greece to discover a parallel[39] showing the positive and negative aspects of this form of education.

The Coran, Sura 4, verse 1, says: "Be careful of your duty towards Allah ...., and towards the 593
wombs (that bare you)". This command is honoured to a high degree on the part of a son. To illustrate 163
the intimate relations between mother and son, I once saw a young Kurd climbing up the steep hill
to the small hospital at the Dokan Dam Site with his sick mother on his back, apparently a more 812
comfortable mode of transport for her than a donkey or a mule[40].

MARRIAGE

The limitations in the choice of spouse are found in the Coran[41]. A man cannot marry his own 582
mother (or other of his father's wives), his daughter or granddaughter, his mother's sister, his father's sister, his sister, his brother's daughter, his mother-in-law or step-daughter. But, in addition, a non-marriageable relationship exists not only between blood relations and intermarried persons but also in respect of milk kinship, which is put on a par with blood relationship. As the law at the same time
recommends that a spouse be sought within the family, marriage possibilities are cousins and second 605
cousins, that is the descendants of uncles, aunts, grand uncles and grand aunts[42]. Of these marriage possibilities the cousin on the father's side is preferable and then the cousin on the mother's side. The terms in the Kurdish kinship system, purely descriptive indicating the genealogical distance between
close relations[43], are: father's brother's daughter, *amôzâ*, (ortho-cousin marriage); father's sister's 601
daughter, *pûrzâ*, (cross-cousin marriage); mother's brother's daughter, *xâlôzâ*, (cross-cousin marriage), and mother's sister's daughter, *pûrzâ*, (ortho-cousin marriage).

In the homes I stayed in I met in the village upper class the father's brother's daughter wedding which, according to Leach[44] and Barth[45] is that preferred by Kurds. In the sheikh family at Topzawa the wife was the daughter of the father's brother in Sargalu. In Serkan two of the sheikh's three married sons were married to two sisters, both daughters of the father's brother. According to Leach the marriages of village leaders "tend to form political alliances" like the "Royal marriages of medieval Europe"[46]. In my experience this was not so, for the cases I met were the father's brother's daughter choice so common in Islam areas.

It was stated that two families could exchange daughters. Both my interpreter and Sheikh Taifür's 583
brother said that if the desired bride had an elder brother, a bride for him is demanded from the 582
bridegroom's family. When asked, the 18 year old son of the Sheikh of Topzawa said further that a man in his milieu was able to marry anyone he wished. However, I do not think that too much faith

can be attached to what this young man said, so I prefer to stick to the facts available about his immediate 582
family. In the humble village environment (Topzawa) I came across three examples of brides having 583
been brought from Solaimani as they gave prestige to the village. In the educated milieu, on the other hand, I met a strongly-expressed wish to be linked by marriage with good, prominent families.

Difference in the position of man and woman when contracting marriage. None of the brides in 585
Kurdistan whom I had an opportunity to observe appeared so radiant as we are accustomed to see in our culture. The Kurdish brides either looked remarkably unaffected or else directly mournful. My interpreter's sister, whose wedding preparations and later wedding I witnessed, went about in the days prior to the wedding extremely unkempt and with an attitude of complete indifference. In reply to my question my interpreter told me that it is not the custom for brides to take any part in the preparations, and that out of regard for her future family no impression must be given of exploiting the working capacity of the young woman; in addition, the bride-to-be must not suggest, by paying too much attention to her appearance, that she is interested in being married.

In her study of weddings and marriages in Palestine, Granqvist probably provides an explanation applicable also to the Kurds, for she says[37] that it is the bridegroom who is happy, and with him his family and friends. Happiness prevails in the home of the bridegroom, the house of the wedding. A bride, on the other hand must bewail her fate. Is she not to leave her family home, and will not this home lose a member? Besides, Granqvist points out, it is considered highly unbecoming for a bride to evince happiness.

When, on the other hand, the marriage negotiations began in the case of my interpreter's brother and the wedding arrangements were being discussed, it was planned as a joyous festival, the home next door being borrowed and a dance arranged in its large courtyard. A later letter, dated 23rd August 1958, told me that 600 people were invited to the wedding, and that the dance had lasted from morning to night. As an unmarried son, his accomodation in the home was confined to a mattress which he [554]
spread out with the rest of the family, plus a niche behind a mirror for his few effects; his pyjamas (leisure and sleeping garment) lay, when not in use, rolled up on a chair in the guest reception room, which he also used for changing. In a word, he had had only a minimum of room at his disposal. When he married he and his wife would be allotted to their sole use one of the house's three living rooms. He and his wife, at all events initially, would form a cell within the family with a claim to space and a private life—a notable improvement of his position in the home.

Marriage policy and marriage negotiations. "Many families have wanted me", was my interpreter's 584
reply to my question as to what possibilities she had had to be married. In other words she could boast of the fact that many *families* had applied to her's regarding the initiation of the marriage negotiations so essential a preliminary to a marriage in a Muslim area, where the world of man and woman is divided, and a young man meets no women other than his nearest relations with whom marriage is precluded.

In the family home of my interpreter at Solaimani I had an opportunity of watching at close quarters the marriage negotiations conducted by the young man's family with that of a possible candidate.

584 The initiative came from the young son himself. After a sister had left to be married, the son of the house, a 26 year old primary school teacher who naturally lived at home, began to conduct low-toned conversations with "my father's wife" (his stepmother), and with his sister my interpreter. These talks did not take place during the day, so to say openly, but in the evenings after many members of the family had gone to their rest. Confidential whispering went on between the two women and him as to whether they knew a suitable young girl in the homes they visited and whether they would not
[454] start negotiating with the mother of such a person. His savings, which he had put by penny by penny,
[585] were in the postoffice (not in the bank) and now amounted to a suitable bride price. I was told that the sum amounted to 300 Dinars, equivalent to £300. The reason why, in addition to his sister, he applied to his stepmother** rather than to his own mother was, I was told, because the younger wife of his father was better looking, a better conversationalist, and less old-fashioned than his own parent. The prospective bride was chosen from among the older pupils at the Geisha School for Girls where my interpreter was a teacher. As both the young man and the girl belonged to one of the better families in Sulaimani, they had never had anything to do with each other. Once, swathed in her aba, the girl had come to deliver a message at her teacher's home, and was told that the young man who had just left was her teacher's brother. This was all the contact the two had had. The girl was described as "very polite". This can be construed as meaning that her appearance was agreeable, her manners pleasing, and that she was well brought up and domestically capable. The families were unrelated to each other.

As I was away on a trip with my interpreter, I unfortunately missed the first two conversations between the women of the young man's family and the girl's mother, but I learned that the young man's stepmother, accompanied by a female acquaintance of established position, esteemed alike for the wealth of her progeny and her worldly possessions, paid an introductory call on the mother of the young girl on Wednesday, 28th August (1957), and a second visit on Friday, 30th August. At the third visit in the girl's home, both my interpreter and I were present. On this occasion four women of the young man's family negotiated with the sole representative of the girl's family, her mother. The talks took place in the home's guest reception room, which lay at the side of the entrance hall and was entered without passing through the family rooms grouped around a wooded courtyard. No refreshments were offered, not even ice water, which stressed that the talks at that stage were not binding in any way. Whilst all this went on we were seated on a very high-legged, uncomfortable sofa and equally uncomfortable chairs in an otherwise bare room. A cousin of the girl concerned entered the room, but the object of the negotiations put in no appearance**.

Two matters were discussed at the third meeting: the one was the character of the customary information collected by the girl's family about the young man's reputation, the other, the size and employment of the bride price, which, in my experience, was debated at this stage and not postponed until the drawing up of the marriage contract by the men. Whereas the young man's family had naturally obtained as much information as possible about the girl and her family before seeking contact, it is only after the first meeting that the other side could begin to investigate a possible son-in-law's reputation in the town where, as a man, he spent the major part of his leisure and working
[525] hours. In the case I had an opportunity of following, it had apparently been said that the young man

sleep in the same room as those with whom marriage was precluded. After the drawing up 584
of the marriage settlement he was thus considered as already her brother-in-law. (That engagements 369
are just as binding as marriage is mentioned by Blackman[111] in regard to the Egyptian *fellahin*). On the other hand, he was never alone with his fiancée. My interpreter was always present in the guest room when the two young people were talking together, and he did not very often pay a visit. They never went to the cinema or paid calls together. She wore the white veil over her head when speaking to him, but at the same time went about in a remarkably slovenly way, attired in old, dirty clothes. The two young people were to go together to Baghdad to buy furniture and clothes with that part of the paid-up bride price that was not to be expended in jewellery. The furniture items were to be in the most modern Baghdadi style, bedroom suit in polished wood and so forth. My interpreter, the [583] elder sister, joined the party which consisted of the couple and a half-sister, 15 years old, who was to be given the chance of seeing the capital. They stayed at an Iraqi-Arab hotel in the main thoroughfare, Rashid Street. My interpreter informed me that all four shared a room in which they had both slept and eaten their meals, prepared food having been bought at shops in the town. As at home there was no undressing at night. Later I stayed with my interpreter and her 26 year old brother at the same hotel. Here also only one room was ordered for the three of us. During the stay at Baghdad the young couple were never alone but under the surveillance of the two sisters with them.

When the prospective bride was on an excursion by car with the women of the house and her elder brother, she (and the other women) wore *aba* and veil, great care being taken that the veil was not lifted or shifted. It was explained that this was in order that nothing could be said about her either by her prospective husband or her future in-laws. There was no actual sign of avoidance as is mentioned by Granqvist[112] in regard to the Palestinian Arabs, where the young people must not meet each other whilst they are engaged, and the prospective bride must hide herself when the young man pays a visit to the home. However, the young people in my interpreter's home at Sulaimani appeared to be surrounded by more restrictions in their affianced state than they had been when they first met as colleagues at the school.

The bride price[113]. Its employment and sociological significance. 583

The bride price *mahr* is mentioned in the Coran, Sure 4, verse 4 and Sure 5, verse 5, as the ordained morning-gift, for it expressly lays down that the Faithful are permitted to take in marriage virtuous women of the believers and virtuous women of the peoples who received the scripture earlier—that is to say Jews and Christians, when they give them their marriage portions and live with them in honour. As early as 1778 Niebuhr reports that the Kurds in the then Turkish territories differed from the Arabs in that greater pleasure was evinced at the birth of a daughter than of a son, as a good [858]
bride price could later be obtained for her, only a small trousseau being given her in return, whereas
the Arabs and Turks expend the whole bride price on the bride's effects and even add to it. Niebuhr [554]
concludes by saying: "many daughters are thus with them a source of wealth[114]".

In a humble village milieu, Balkha, I was told that a 11–12 year old bride was acquired for a bride price of 20 Din., plus a dress for the bride. Whether the sum was paid out in cash or in kind, cattle etc. was not stated. Bishop[115] says of the Bakhtiari that the bride price can be paid in the form of a

583 sum of money or in cattle, according to the circumstances of the family. Similarly, in a humble village milieu (Topzawa) 200 Din. was paid for a bride from Sulaimani, the bride's father, it was said, retaining one quarter for himself; possibly this was the share kept in hand in the event of divorce or widowhood. The residue, 150 Din., was spent on jewellery and three complete outfits for the bride, on dinner service, mattresses and quilts for the bridal bed, plus a bridal chest. The bridegroom also presented the bride with a battery wireless set. Of gifts in return from the bride's family were mentioned six complete dresses for the bride (but nothing to the bridegroom's family).

[587] It was stated that the bride price for a widow or a divorced woman was less than that for a young girl, which corresponds to what Lane reports about the Egyptian Arabs[116].

In Sulaimani the highest bride price I heard of was 1500 Din., to which must be added the part deposited for payment in the event of the wife being divorced or widowed, which must have been at least about 500 Din. if a third, and 750 Din. if a half of the full bride price. As already mentioned, my interpreter's brother had saved up 500 Din., whereas the paid out part of the bride price given by the brother-in-law for her sister was 400 Din. In the meantime I was told that the girl's family had made it a condition that 1500 Din. be deposited.

As an example of the way the paid up portion of the bride price is expended, it may be of interest to review the purchases made with the sum of 400 Din. above-mentioned. As regards jewellery for the bride, turban chains with precious stones, and aigrets, plus chin chain with coins for securing the cap—all parts of gold—were ordered from a Sulaimani goldsmith. Compared with a similar set of ornaments I saw worn by the wife of the sheikh of Topzawa, we can assume that this set accounted for at least 100 Din.

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352 The purchases in Baghdad were: a bedroom suite consisting of a polished wooden double bed with a spring mattress, a double wardrobe, dressing table with oval, adjustable mirror, two night tables, a stool, a large silk-lined, fitted beauty box covered with pink velvet, and a dumb waiter. In addition a spangle-embroidered rose satin bed-spread, material for a silk-embroidered rose quilt, white gauze bed-spread for use in great heat, rose satin curtains, two ornamental cushions sewn over with sequins, a rose satin loosecoat studded with sequins, and rose satin for a pouch in which a copy of the Coran was to be hung[117]. Bales of cotton, plus material for covering pillows, an extra mattress for the double bed and two single mattresses for use on the roof and for sitting on were also bought, as well as bed linen: sheets, eiderdown cover and pillowcases. Other purchases comprised guest room furniture consisting of a sofa, three or four chairs, a larger and a smaller smoker's table, all in steel and green plastic. Then there were kitchen and eating utensils, tea glasses, samovar, wash basin and appurtenant water jug of brass, European knick-knacks, paper flowers to put in china vases. Satin for coats and waistcoats; chiffon, nylon, and tulle interwoven with metal thread for kirtles; artificial silk with interwoven metal thread or taffeta for the long baggy trousers. Artificial silk and satin for the shift was bought either at Baghdad or Sulaimani and distributed among the bazar tailors, seamstresses and women at home to be made up.

To sum up, the bride price was expended on the bride's trousseau, household equipment, plus a bedroom suite in European style of the last century, very modern guest room furniture in functionalistic steel—in striking contrast to the furniture in the parental home, where the oldest things were

clumsy, high-legged, un-upholstered sofas and chairs, whilst the later pieces were covered in red velvet 583
in the French fashion of the '80s. 352

Corresponding to all this for the bride's future home and for her personal use—purchased with the 400 Din. the bridegroom had to pay out of the bride price—the bride's family, a mixture of 583 educated and uneducated urban environments, also expended about 130 Din. on gifts for the bridegroom and his relatives who arrived the day before the wedding.

The bridegroom received from his coming in-laws his wedding clothes, in this case a light European 583
summer suit, and with it leather shoes, socks, ties, handkerchiefs, shirt, underwear, pyjamas, soap, 431
shaving tackle, bath gown, small bath mat of velvet to sit on during the bath, and a box of sweets. 291
All these were later wrapped in a hand-embroidered silk cloth[118], and delivered by a messenger, an elderly woman to whom he had to give a gift of money. Three of the bridegroom's closest female relatives, that is to say the mother and two sisters, were given printed cotton for kirtles. Seven of the bridegroom's male relations received gifts from the bride's family in the form of a shirt and a pair of drawers. Of the shirts three were European style, bought in Baghdad, accompanied by ties, socks and handkerchief, whilst the other four shirts were home-made, Kurdish type. The seven pairs of drawers were all bag-shaped and without fly, though the three pairs intended to be worn with the European shirt and European suit were not cut quite as wide as the others that were designed to be worn under a Kurdish dress. A large consignment of English greys was purchased for this purpose, being cut out in the home by a seamstress who took them away to be made up.

In addition to the expense on these gifts to the bridegroom and his family, came the value of the 431
ornaments that the bride would receive from her family when paying her first visit in her family home 583
a week after the wedding in order to take a bath. The value of these trinkets was said to be 42 Din. Thus the cost of the wedding was, according to my information: bridegroom and his family 400 Din.; bride's family 192 Din., which latter roughly corresponded to half the bride price. To this came the cost incurred by the bride's family in entertaining the women who visited the bride the whole of the wedding day until she left.

Hay mentions that there is a difference between the urban and the village milieu in Kurdistan in 114
regard to the expenses payable by the two families involved in a wedding. According to him[119] the 583
young man in a Kurdish village must collect a certain sum in order to acquire a bride, whereas in the 369
towns the bride's family gives her such ample equipment that it is unnecessary for the young man to save up in order to "purchase" her. This does not agree with my experience and the information I was given by Kurds.

As has already been shown, the position in Southern Kurdistan is that in villages the man pays a certain sum in money or cattle as the bride price or bride wealth in addition to a dress for the bride, receiving in return nothing whatever from the bride's family. To this extent my information agrees with Hay's—and with Lane's in regard to conditions in Egyptian villages[120]. When we come to urban conditions the bridegroom, in my experience, is obliged to pay a bride price, the distribution of which has been explained above, corresponding to the girl's social position. However, the bridegroom and his relatives, plus the bride, receive from the bride's family gifts costing about half as much as the amount paid out of the bride price. This does not accord with Hay, who, in the case of the towns, 583 114 369 does not mention that the man must pay any bride price. Nor does it quite agree with the information Lane gives about urban conditions among Arabs in Egypt, where he lets the wedding expenses of the bride's family equal the sum paid in bride wealth by the bridegroom, but states that the money expended by the former goes on furniture, clothes and trinkets for the bride, and that all this, called "gahaz", is the bride's personal property, taken with her in the event of divorce[121], whereas he makes no mention of the bride's family presenting any form of gift to the bridegroom and his family.

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585 291 *Wedding preparations.* Of the bride's outfit the satin quilt and the quilted coats are made by male craftsmen in the bazar. On the other hand a seamstress came to the home where, under the supervision of the women in the family, she cuts out kirtles, long baggy trousers and jackets from the silk, muslin and brocade purchased in Baghdad and Sulaimani. When the material was cut out, the bride's step-mother, thus a married woman, brought a large piece of loaf sugar which, with a sugar hammer, [777] was smashed and strewn over the material. This was said to bring good luck.

The same seamstress cut out of a roll of English greys the shirts of genuine Kurdish form and the drawers given by the bride's family to male relatives of the bridegroom. The seamstress then rolled the pieces of material together, and left to sew them in her own home.

585 302 515 The day before the wedding in my interpreter's home at Sulaimani a woman arrived in order to remove all superfluous hair from the bride's body, whilst the bride herself removed the pubic hairs during a triple steam bath in the house's bathroom. Whereas an unmarried Kurdish girls, as with the Arabs, never shaves or removes hair from her body in other ways, she must from the time of marriage keep her body free of hair[122]. Hairs are plucked out or removed by smearing on a paste, the composition of which I was unable to discover. Dickson mentions a depilatory of this kind with the Badawi, a solution of *zinc* and arsenic[123] used by the well-to-do, whilst other women pluck out the hair with their fingers. Lane states that in Egypt women use a kind of resin called "libân shâmee", which is smeared on in a melted state, whereas other women pluck the hairs out "after merely rubbing the part with ashes of charcoal"[124]. At another place Lane[125] refers to a depilatory, "noorah", composed of quicklime mixed with about one eight part of orpiment. This powder is stirred in water to a paste that is smeared on, loosening the hairs in two minutes, after which it is washed off.

[305] This removal of hair in my interpreter's family thus took place in the home with the help of an expert, and not, as reported by Granqvist about the Palestinian Arabs, in the public bath[126]. It was said that the bridegroom went through a similar process[127].

585 291 177 In the bride's home this form of beauty treatment in connexion with the marriage was of great interest to all the women there. This went so far that an aunt of the bride grasped her by the legs as she sat tailor-fashion in the courtyard, and attempted to overturn her in order to satisfy herself that the pubic hairs had been duly removed. It was possible to determine this as the bride that evening was not wearing Kurdish-woman's costume with wide baggy trousers, but a long, pink nightgown with puffed sleeves—a European phenomenon adopted into the Kurdish dress scheme, worn with a 834 little jacket but without long trousers. Apart from this episode, which must be considered an indication of the extent to which a wedding, down to the last detail, is a family and not a private affair, Kurds

585 from which clay stairs, with high, uneven steps, led up. From the back wall of the room there was
access to two smaller apartments, the one of which was to be the bridal chamber. Mattresses to sit
[352] on were spread out along the back wall for the reception of the bride, and under them was placed
[262] a lump of honey wrapped in a bread "pancake". It was stated that this should assure the gentleness
and sweetness of the bride. Naturally, the women brought with them their children of all ages so the
room was full to overflowing. The places of honour for the sheikh's wife and daughter were on the
[296] mattresses lining the back wall. Entertainment during the wait consisted of cigarettes of Kurdish
[354] tobacco and very sweet tea served by the youngest of the women present, a girl of about 15. Into this
feminine milieu, where the hostess was the bridegroom's mother[140], came, when the car cortège was
sighted, the bridegroom and one or two male relatives who, like him, had not participated in the
fetching of the bride. They helped him to smooth a stick about 2 metres long with which he took up
his stand on the edge of the roof just above the entrance door, surrounded by the women, who had
[262] stood up and gone across the roof to him. Sweetmeats were passed round among the women; a fowl
was held ready by a woman standing at the side of the bridegroom. When the bride was taken out
of the bridal car she was led towards the house, supported by her two female companions, the aunt
and the midwife from her own home. Like the other brides brought to the village she had over her
turban a reddish-yellow, transparent gauze veil hanging down over her face[141], reddish-yellow was
[292] also the predominant colour of her dress[142], which despite the great heat consisted of so many layers
of clothing that she had difficulty in moving. The costume was without belt, but this was no exception
as women often went without belts. It had therefore hardly the significance mentioned by Granqvist
in the case of the Palestinian Artas: that the absence of the belt was to make her prolific[143]. As the
bride approached the entrance to the house and was about to cross the threshold, the fowl was released
and flew over her beating its wings; at the same time the bridegroom lifted the heavy stick, which he
held in both hands, and gave her a powerful blow on the crown of the head. He and the other young
men thereupon disappeared from the women's group and were not seen again as long as the guests
stayed in the house. The bride was helped up the stairs by her two women companions, led across
the room and given a seat on a mattress. The mother of the bridegroom bade her welcome by bending
over her and placing her head first against her right, and then against her left, shoulder[144], where-
after the bride's reddish-yellow veil was raised and the women pressed around her in order to see the
new member of the village community. It was stated that this bride and bridegroom had never seen
each other before the wedding, and the only contact they had had so far was the blow given by the
groom to his bride on her arrival at her future home. The bride's trousseau, purchased with the bride
[583] price, in this case supplemented by dresses given by the family, was carried up the stairs after her.
The bridal chest (E. 2270) with a painted glass front, containing the rolled-up mattresses stuffed with
cotton that were to comprise the marriage bed, and the unavoidable battery-operated wireless set,
were carried into the room that was to serve as the bridal chamber.

585 The bride was tattooed on the back of the hand with three dots at the base of the little finger. Her
304 finger tips were stained with henna as were also the palms, the latter being painted with a sun, a crescent
301 moon and a star. She wore stockings, a thing I otherwise only saw among Turkish women in Mosul,
so it was not possible to know whether her feet also were henna-stained. [292]

178 771 562 particularly on the time taken up during the day by religion and the attention to be paid to it. None of the educated women with whom I resided said prayers daily (see p. 149). The fact that they worked outside the home as school teachers, hospital or visiting nurses, was such a breach of the original Islamic pattern in which the exercise of religion in daily life demanded both time, place and attention which were difficult to reconcile with any kind of constant and effective work. My interpreter, a representative of the best-educated Kurdish women of the present time, had sacrificed her active participation in Islam's religious practices. However, by so doing, she lost the right and duty to break off from even the most pressing work in order to concentrate on spiritual matters. In consequence, some of the dignity of daily life disappeared, for quarrels and dramatics are difficult when regularly broken by the necessity of prayer. If women are enrolled into an effective conveyor band system outside the home, religion—and the peace of mind that goes with it—will be largely lost to them.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE BASIS ON WHICH THE EMANCIPATION OF THE EUROPEAN WOMAN BEGAN AND THAT EXISTING IN MUSLIM AREAS

562 171 If we compare conditions in the West with those in Islamic areas the following differences are apparent:

When the woman's emancipation movement began in Western society in the previous century, two worlds existed for women over a certain age: that of the wife and that of the old maid. Due to the fact that all women within a community like the Kurdish and other Muslim societies possessed the possibility of living the life of a normal woman—to be married and bear children—there has never been in Mohammedan countries a group of matrimonially-superfluous women, the type mainly behind the Women's movement in the West. Even to-day in Western communities the first thing stated about a woman—apart from the position she may personally have acquired—is whether she is married or not, Mrs. or Miss. From the point of view of career it has always been, and still is, in the Western world of greater advantage for a woman to enter marriage than it is for a man—quite contrary to conditions in Kurdistan. To remain unmarried in the Islamic world is, as maintained by several quarters[47], an impossibility, a view to which the Kurds subscribe. All a young man's energies are therefore concentrated on saving up money for a fitting bride price.

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583 562 114 The difference in the view of the bride price as viewed from the outside world and as seen from inside—in this case in Egypt—is stressed by Granqvist when she writes: "As a matter of fact there is a very close connection between the bride price given and the value ascribed to a woman. But while the fellahin women would consider it a shame and disparagement if nothing or too small a bride price

were given, and while it is clear that the husband himself would look down upon such a wife, and that the public opinion would belittle her and therefore a high bride price is looked upon as a protection and a guarantee that a woman shall be honoured and well treated. Europeans have looked at the facts differently and said: so low is the position of the woman that she is bought. Now people among whom bride price is customary do not understand the Western ideal; their natural conclusion is that she is not thought to be worth a bride price. Here two completely different points of view clash and in each case only the objectionable in the opposite view is considered. It shows how much people's judgement depends on custom, which is no certain or absolute measure of value". 583 562 119

What is now being offered the Muslim woman in various areas, and what will be offered the Kurdish woman sooner or later, is the abandonment of a protected and valued position; she will be asked to renounce being an essential link in a man's career, the only means whereby he can raise himself to the more socially-valued married state. 562 198 559

Instead she will obtain the partial equality we know in the West. In place of the clearly-stressed special position based on the difference of the sexes, she will acquire a partial equality with the opportunity to compete with men in all walks of life. At the same time her efforts in the spheres that have hitherto been reserved to her will be correspondingly less prized.

As the industrialisation of the country progresses, a large part of women's domestic activities will, as has happened in other countries, be transferred to trade with all its consequences, both good and bad. Her firmly-anchored culture pattern, sanctioned by religion, will collapse, though not by her wish, rather the reverse.

In the event of divorce and the adoption of monogamy, the stationary home that has so far existed for children will be dissolved. The solitary, divorced mother and the deserted unmarried mother will become social features to be incorporated into the community structure, as is about to be the case in our culture, where the number of solitary women has now reached such proportions that it can neither be overlooked nor concealed. The elderly will not obtain a place in the joint family, and the homes will no longer be able to afford protection to girls. The paramount demand concerning virginity is only logically justified provided a home exists where the girl can dwell, protected from the difficulties of life, and her parents— and not herself—arrange her marriage. 198 562 593

The older members of the family are deprived of the right and duty to plan the marriages of the young and thus extend their family connexions with consequent improved security for the individual. The emotional choice of a married partner will become universal. As the young gradually take their fate into their own hands they will neglect their personal responsibility for their elders, which will be taken over by the State.

When saying that women are "emancipated" in Islamic areas when the veil, and what it stands for, is abolished, this change in her way of life cannot be compared with what happened to the Western woman when emancipated at the turn of the century. It is true that the life pattern of Islamic women 198 562 reduced brideprice, or none at all; so from the point of view of the 582 potential groom, the incentive to cousin marriage is considerable. No rationalization of the pattern in terms of the Koranic approval of close kin marriage was ever advanced in conversations on the subject — in fact, the contrary was occasionally claimed. — We shall return later to some more basic factors relating to this marriage pattern.

Any special preference for FaBrDa as against the other three types 583 of cousins was denied, and the higher incidence of FaBrDa marriages was explained by the fact that there «are more of them». This is in fact true, as far as the local village is concerned. A certain amount of inter-village marriage does take place. Marriage being neolocal in the man's village or occasionally patrilocal, all FaBr's children will be living in your own village, whereas a certain number of those related to you through a female will reside in other villages.

The frequency of marriage with actual, non-classificatory cousin is very high, ranging around 60 % in many of the villages studied (see Table 3). Considering that any irregularity in sex or age distribution of cousins must affect the opportunities for cousin marriage adversely, 60 % is probably close to the practical maximal frequency which such a marriage form can ever attain.

A second type of marriage is the *zhin-ba-zhin* (= sister exchange). In such cases of course the bride price is eliminated by the reciprocity of the two men exchanging their sisters with one another, and only the expenses immediately connected with the marriage celebration and trousseau remain. From the purely financial point of view, the sister exchange is thus advantageous, and may in a sense be regarded as an extension of the FaBrDa marriage pattern within the village community. In the non-tribal villages, such marriages are fairly frequent. On other counts, however, they are not considered too satisfactory. Where no close kin ties exist between the two men performing the exchange, the chances of disruption of the unions are increased: sibling loyalties are of the same order of magnitude as [595] loyalty between spouses, so domestic difficulties in the one household are said to produce similar conflicts in the other household, in a vicious circle.

581 In the case of a marriage between non-relatives, where no direct
• [583] exchange of women is arranged, the brideprice is quite high, running from £ 30 to 100 — and these prices are in fact paid. This is considered to correspond to the actual economic value of a woman, so no obligation — e. g. a return marriage in the next generation — remains. Because of the size of the sum involved, it is often vital for the young man to avoid full payment, and the high incidence of cousin marriage, as well as of sister exchange, may be seen partly as a result of this.

It is on the other hand more difficult to explain how the father can be willing to forego his right to a brideprice in the case of a nephew. His household is quite separate from that of his brother and nephew, and non-payment of brideprice constitutes a direct net loss. The origins of the rule might conceivably be sought in a now passed patrilineal extended family organization, where transfer of property between brothers would be meaningless. Today, the pattern is an established privilege of certain categories of relatives, enforced by those who profit from it. And the right is indeed enforced, as indicated by the statement of the father, cited above, and by the not infrequent murder of girls refusing their cousins (e. g. Hay, 1921 p. 71). Stories of such conflicts are very popular among Kurds, and the occasional forceful reminders serve to assure the privilege.

Probably the most fundamental consideration inducing a man to give his daughter to a brother's son has the character of a positive sanction, and is connected with the feud, and political power in general. In essence, it may be summarized as follows: A man's power is proportional to the number of riflemen he can mobilize to support his case. Especially in the feud situation, these alignments of younger men around an older leader are in lineage terms. If a man has alienated his nephews by denying them their traditional rights, he will have great difficulties rallying them in time of need. A marriage between his daughter and a brother's son contributes positively to prevent such alienation of collateral branches. No other son-in-law can fill this function, since a man is not regarded as responsible for his affinals *qua* affinals. The only persons who can be expected to give such political support are co-lineage males. — After a descrip-

In the ideal, the Kurdish family which maintains ortho-cousin
marriage and does not require the wife to change her place of residence 592
on marriage forms what may be termed a "fratrilocal" group. Brothers 582
are close neighbours or even share the same house. They frequently
work their landholdings jointly, perhaps even in cooperation with their
cousins. The marriage of ortho-cousins clearly serves to simplify and
perpetuate such cooperation. Moreover in such a case the bride-price, [583] •
whatever its nominal amount - and the Kurds are keen to flatter their
wives by asserting that they have paid a quite fabulous price for them,
- is in practice nothing but a sort of book entry, a transfer of assets
from the right hand to the left. Even where the marriage to father's
brother's daughter does not take place, there is still a strong
tendency for a man to marry a girl from his own village - i.e. a
classificatory "ortho-cousin" - if for no other reason than that the
Agha must approve of all marriages and he has an obvious interest in
keeping the group as closely unified as possible. Besides, a man of
the commoner class would normally have comparitively few opportunities
of either meeting or bargaining for a girl from another village, still
less for a girl of another clan or tribe. Startling romances and [28]
elopements do take place, but they are the exception and are usually
followed by a long and bloody trail of vengeance. For the commoner
the general rule of marriage within the taifa is fairly well maintained.
In this connection the building of the road will probably have
important consequences for the Balik in the near future, since the
ordinary tribesman can now much more readily make contact with groups
other than his own immediate kinsfolk.

Marriage of Aghas

The foregoing applies however only to the marriage arrangements 622
of commoner families (kurmanj). Quite different are the conditions
that govern the marriage of the son of an Agha. Mohammedan law 581
permits a man to have four wives at a time, and to effect divorce
simply by the pronouncement of the word taleq three times. In
practice scarcely any of the commoners among the Balik can afford more
than one wife, and polygyny is the almost exclusive prerogative of the
Aghas. The marriage to father's brother's daughter serves to simplify
and concentrate the inheritance of cattle, implements and other items
of 'capital' equipment within the economic working unit of the group
household and to avoid friction over the inheritance of tenancy rights.
But the Agha is not swayed by considerations of inheritance since, in
the limited sense already described, he 'owns' all the available land
anyway and there is no question of splitting up the territory at
death. His aim rather is to gain prestige and live at peace with his
neighbours. We find therefore that the marriages of Aghas tend to
take the form of political alliances, rather after the style of the
royal marriages of mediaeval Europe. Sheikh Mohammed Agha of Walash
for instance, who in the course of a long life has had 9 wives and 15
surviving children, appears to be related either by marriage or

277 44/2 effect of greatly reducing the ultimate return for the producer. Thus a cultivator who sold his crop for a cash advance at the time of sowing would only get about 60% of the market value of his ultimate crop. Merchants would pay substantial gifts - either in cash or kind - to the Agha for the right to trade and in return the Agha would in effect guarantee the contract. Thus if an individual cultivator failed to meet his contract the Agha could force him to sell his personal goods to meet the bond, though for reasons of kinship it seems likely that the Agha would in many cases prefer to meet the liability himself.

Marketing procedure 3. Detailed enquiries in Walash revealed that the tobacco surplus for that village is fairly small and is disposed of either through individual tobacco dealers operating from Erbil or else through the ordinary shop; terms of trade are for cash only, and there is no system of advances. From Bergala, where the tobacco cultivation is much more extensive, I unfortunately obtained no information concerning marketing methods.

Having dealt with the various individual contacts between members of the village and those outside it, there remain for examination those forms of exchange within the group itself which have an essentially social rather than an economic basis. Owing to lack of empirical data I can do little more than point out what are the principal occasions for these exchanges.

583 [584] Marriage. A bride price is payable by the bridegroom to the bride's father. I was told that if the wife ran away or otherwise misbehaved herself the husband could claim back part of the bride price, but the information was not specific. * In the event of a divorce the husband is responsible for the maintenance of his former wife at any rate during her pregnancy and frequently longer. It is difficult to obtain reliable figures concerning the amount of bride price paid. Hay quotes the figure of £500 for a wealthy Agha. There is a natural tendency to exaggerate the figures both as flattery for the lady and to create an air of affluence about the informant. When I pointed out that in the case of the marriage of ortho-cousins living as close neighbours in the same village the payment of bride price, whatever its amount, would be little more than a nominal transaction, this was admitted; nevertheless, it was argued, every girl's self

* Hay (p. 44) says the husband is responsible only for three months after divorce or during pregnancy whichever is the longer and this is good Mohammedan law. According to my interpreter important Aghas wishing to increase the number of their household will sometimes divorce one of their wives merely in order to marry a fifth; in such a case the divorced wife would remain a member of the Agha's household indefinitely, though whether her position would be that of concubine was not made clear. The situation however is hypothetical as I obtained no concrete examples.

esteem demands that her price should be a high one. It would need a 582 *
very intimate knowledge of all concerned to find out what real transactions take place within the village on the occasion of a marriage. Where the marriage is to someone outside the village the position is more clear, especially in the case of the Aghas, though here 583
again there is a tendency to exaggerate the figures involved. A point of some interest is the frequency with which Aghas or their sons marry 609
the daughters of townspeople. For instance a son of Sheikh Mohammed of Walash was married to a daughter of Mustafa Effendi, the leading notable of Rowanduz, and one of the wives of Mir Hamid Amin of Dergala was also a townswoman. Such marriages are socially approved of as it is considered that townswomen bring with them an air of culture and sophistication. The reciprocal marriage of Aghas daughter to townsman's son is however most unusual, mainly because the townsmen considers the tribal girl raw and uncivilised. The one sided nature of the transaction thus represents a further periodic cash loss to the tribal group without any compensating return.* It is not to be supposed that the bride price payment is the only economic transaction taking place on the occasion of a marriage. Near relatives on both sides send presents to the bridegroom; these may be in kind or cash and in the case of marriages between important Agha families may amount to substantial sums.

Death. Compared with normal Moslem usage the mourning 765
ceremonies of the Kurds, at any rate for Aghas, are unusually
prolonged. While I was staying at Walash the wife of Mustafa Agha, 574
second son of Sheikh Mohammed, died. As Mustafa was the Agha of a
neighbouring village I did not see the ceremonies involved. I was 431
told that the proceedings consisted principally of the bereaved sitting at home in his Guest House and providing food and drink for all those friends and relatives who may think fit to come and condole with him. This would go on for a month. Moreover it was reckoned that as Mustafa had only a small Guest House all his less immediate kin would have to be accommodated at Walash. I gathered that the mourners would bring with them gifts which would at least approximately compensate for the cost of entertaining them, but the immediate economic strain occasioned by a death such as this may be considerable. As soon as Sheikh Mohammed heard the news he sent off riders to Rowanduz to fetch four sacks of sugar (36 kilos each), two bags of rice and a big roll

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* Formerly it appears it was quite customary for commoners to sell [561]
their unwanted girl children to townsfolk. The girls were known as Kaniya. During adolescence she was a slave servant of the purchaser but might be married off quite respectably when she grew up. The system appears to have much in common with the mui tsai system of South China.

852
304 circumcised at about the age of seven. Once more the relatives and friends gather, sweetmeats are produced, and there are two days of preliminary feasting and music to dim the pain of the operation. On the third day, when the operation is
[535] performed, the *reshbelak* (national dance) is danced, in which men and women stand arm in arm in a row swaying backwards and forwards while music and singing fill the night with sound.

583 The next great event in the life of the young Kurd is his marriage. When he reaches about eighteen years of age, or earlier among the tribes, he takes a wife. Among the poorer people a girl of one family is exchanged for a girl of another family, and a double marriage takes place; or if one girl is too young, she is set aside as the *dazgiran* or fiancée of the boy until old enough to be married (that is, about 14 years old in the case of women). So for a poor family the only expense incurred is three days of feasting and the

[548]

583 price of cooking-pots, blankets and a carpet with which to set up the new household. The total cost of a poor man's wedding is between five and ten pounds sterling.

Among the richer families a girl may be bought instead of exchanged. The price may be anything, depending on the beauty of the girl and the willingness of the family to part with her (that is, on their ability to argue well). The wedding feast of a rich *agha* (chieftain) may involve feeding a thousand guests for a period of ten days.

462 In the nomadic tribe, however, the
situation is rather different. The women
583 of the tribe do all the work while the men
sit about talking and sleeping. By night
they rarely sleep, as they sit around with
their rifles ready to guard the box of
money and valuables kept in the tent.
Therefore the beauty of a young girl
taken in marriage is a secondary consideration in determining her price. The
nomad is rich in live-stock, if not in cash,
and the cost of a girl may vary between

462 about forty and one hundred pounds.
583 Her value will depend on her utility—her physical strength for manual labour, and her ability to make carpets, rugs, clothes and other things.

562 Contrary to the practice in most Mohammedan countries the Kurdish woman goes about openly and unveiled. She carries herself with a quiet dignity rivalling that of her menfolk. Although women are still regarded as chattels, the women in a Kurdish family have an appreciable influence over their spouses. The symbol of triumphant womanhood in Kurdistan was the famous Adela Khanum, who on the death of her husband took over the reins of chieftainship of the Jaf tribe when it was at the height of its wealth and power. She ruled it with a wisdom and firmness rivalling that of Queen Elizabeth.

177 When education in a foreign tongue, 'European' clothes, and rattling typewriters are forced upon the Kurd by the threat of rattling machine-guns in the way